

**WAIMAKARIRI DISTRICT COUNCIL
HISTORIC HERITAGE ITEM RECORD FORM**

2021 District Plan Item No. **HH012**

HERITAGE ITEM NAME 'Brooklands', Leech homestead

ADDRESS 521 Rangiora Woodend Road, Rangiora

PHOTOGRAPH



(www)

DISTRICT PLAN ITEM NO. H051 **HNZ LIST NO. & CATEGORY** 1822 / 2
(at time of assessment)

LEGAL DESCRIPTION Lot 1 DP 80275

VALUATION NUMBER 2159148300

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION 1878?

**ARCHITECT/DESIGNER/
BUILDER** Unknown (BW Mountfort, architect?)

STYLE Domestic Gothic Revival

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Two-storey dwelling with rectangular footprint and gabled roof forms. Principal, north-facing elevation has largely symmetrical composition with gabled end bays flanking a concave veranda with trellised posts and twin gabled dormers above. Arch-headed windows on first floor, gabled end bays have a faceted bay window and Chicago window. Shed dormers on east and west elevations. Double-hung sash windows, decorative bargeboards and finials.

MATERIALS/STRUCTURE

Timber framing and weatherboards, brick and corrugated metal roofing.

ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS

Alterations; including shed dormers and finials? (Heathcote Helmore, architect; pre-1965).

SETTING

'Brooklands' stands on the south side of Rangiora Woodend Road, directly opposite its intersection with Kippenberger Avenue and Golf Links Road and east of Rangiora township. The house is set back from the road, within a mature garden, and is largely screened from view. The extent of scheduling is limited to the immediate garden setting of the house, rather than the land parcel as a whole, notwithstanding the potential archaeological values of the property.

HISTORY

'Brooklands' was built by George John Leech (1821-1902), who had emigrated from England with his wife Ann aboard the last of the Canterbury Association ships in 1853. They immediately settled on land at Rangiora and, after working as a banker in England, Leech took up farming and, later, flour and flax milling. The initial funding for the farm had been provided by Leech's brother-in-law William Brooks, after whom the farm was named. The property was offered for let by Leech in January 1868 for an unspecified period of time; an eight-room house was then on the property, presumably the house opposite Smarts Road that is mentioned by Hawkins. In 1875 Leech purchased from Brooks those parcels that had not already been sold by the latter and in c.1878 the Leech family moved into a new house opposite the mill. Leech was predeceased by his wife Ann (c.1823-85) and survived by seven children; he had been a keen supporter of Rangiora High School and active in the Anglican church. The property was subdivided to its current extent in 1999 and remains in Leech family ownership today.

HISTORIC AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

'Brooklands' has high historic significance for its association with GJ Leech, a pioneer settler, farmer and miller, his wife Ann, their family and descendants. According to Hawkins, 'Brooklands' was Rangiora's 'first freehold farm' and one of the district's larger farms in the later 1860s and early 1870s. GJ Leech has been described as the patriarch of colonial Rangiora, he was known as 'Waikoruru' by local Maori, and his diary provides an important record of settler life in North Canterbury.

CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

'Brooklands' has cultural value as it demonstrates the way of life of its early owner-occupiers.

ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

'Brooklands' has architectural significance as a Domestic Gothic Revival style homestead that retains a good level of authenticity. The design of the house suggests the input of an architect, perhaps Benjamin Mountfort, who GJ Leech would have met through St John's Anglican Church in Rangiora, or one of his contemporaries such as Samuel Farr or Frederick Strouts. Alterations were undertaken by noted Christchurch architect Heathcote Helmore in the early 1960s.

TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE

'Brooklands' has technological and craftsmanship value for the evidence it provides of Victorian construction methods and materials. Two small cusped lancet windows from the first Anglican church in Rangiora light the staircase.

CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

'Brooklands' has contextual value as a local feature that contributes to the historic character of its rural setting and the environs of Rangiora.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

As the dwelling pre-dates 1900, its site has potential archaeological significance.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

'Brooklands', the Leech homestead, has high overall heritage significance to Rangiora and the Waimakariri district. The house has high historic significance for its association with the Leech

family for almost 150 years and cultural value as a demonstration of the way of life of its early owners and occupants. 'Brooklands' has architectural significance as a well-preserved Domestic Gothic Revival style homestead and technological and craftsmanship value for its mid-Victorian timber construction and detailing. 'Brooklands' has contextual value as a local historic feature and its site has potential archaeological significance given the development of the property since the 1850s.

HERITAGE CATEGORY

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REFERENCES

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REPORT COMPLETED

21 March 2019

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Extent of scheduling, limited to the immediate garden setting, 'Brooklands', 521 Rangiora Woodend Road, Rangiora.



Land parcel as a whole with house marked by star.



'Brooklands' before the mid-20th century alterations designed by Heathcote Helmore.